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Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa

Summary

This paper is a transcription of a Ch'an Academy Workshop lecture by Sumi-e Master Andre Sollier held at the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd., on the 5 July 1987.

Introducing the Way of Sumi-e, Zen or Ch'an painting and practise, the paper begins with the importance of the sketch (or any medium used) as a mind training, to bring direct experience to the paper, without interpretation or hesitation, to work fast. Leaving aside any notion of being a hobby or pass-time for cultivating the ego. Rather the sketch in Ch'an or Sumi-e is to experience a direct connection with life, dropping all speculation. Using the child's approach, it is to pick up the broken crayon or ragged brush and begin, where as the adult can tend toward the ego minds, discursive thinking and complaining minds 'it's too difficult'. Rather it is, like the child, to 'pick up' the correct confidence, and right there to be fully engaged. Other aspects discussed, supportive and central to the practise are: the kindness of the teacher; cultivation of patience 'you make a stroke, you make a stroke - nothing more'; determining right action and right effort; the importance of chi or energy beyond the technique or li of the ink or brush; sincerity as a commitment; the importance of generosity, loving kindness and persistence in your practice; impermanence; the middle way and choosing harmony over disharmony; concluding with knowing the importance of ritual, and letting it go, to come to the clear mind and the Way of Zen.

The paper was edited by Andre Sollier.

Please note: In this version, for clarity of language where suitable, square brackets have been used to add a [word] or [part of a word] while making sure to retain the original meaning, essence and intention of the author's words.

1. Importance of the sketch in Mind Training - to work fast.

The sketch is extremely important. The painter, the Zen painter, the Chinese, Japanese, Korean painter work enormously with the sketch. I've seen a cupboard of some painter in Japan full of books of sketches. No sketch is too little, no subject is too modest. Anything you catch you can catch, you have the time to catch with any medium, when is nothing to stop. Sketch is a training, is a basic for the mind, too. Because you come in relation, close relation, instantly close relation with the subject, nature of people or whatever, or still-life. The sketch is a very quick expression, an intuitive approach because a lot has to do with Sumi-e. Sumi-e is a direct expression without compromise; your mind is there, is a (clap) contact with the subject in a short time.

You have not time when you make a sketch, generally, to think too much, because the subject moves or you are moving shortly, so just a little thing.

You can make [a] sketch from television, don't laugh; it is very good because the television gives you something very constructive. You are not always able to travel in the bush to see different animals, waterfalls etc. But your television in our time, shows you views, [it] is no compromise, the view disappears, so you have two alternatives. It is to work fast or work from the memory from the last view you have seen. Is except[able], if in one landscape you make only the beak of the bird, is good. Is just the same as you look at the bird in the window, you can make maybe only the beak, but is still, is still valuable, the beak, the eyes, or a limb is a very good training. Training the mind to be quick, to be on the spot, to be in union with the subject without putting the ego in between because that is impossible to thinking you know.

Medium, not so important of course if you prepare your ink and you have a brush and a lot of paper, well you make more training with the brush. When you sketch, if you have a pencil, I think, that is a very good thing, a relatively fat, soft pencil will give you fine line for working quick. And avoid to get[ting] a rubber beside [you] because you have no time to do that, well it is not in the spirit of that.

So you make only [a] sketch... it is [an] approach, which is very spiritual, too. Well, I will say when I approach painting, I know in the Ch'an Academy you are working in such a way but I will put more emphasis again. It's never too much emphasis on that aspect.

2. The need to stop cultivating our Ego Minds.

Work spiritually. Painting is not a hobby. Sculpture is not a hobby. Music is not a hobby. All are a kind of donation to self, to the nature, to life. Well, you

look may be not for you, but, some people think, may be, oh, "he must be some religious or philos-ophy." No, he's not. If you give you completely in expression, visual, or auditive, whatever expression not to pass your time, not to enjoy yourself only in the purpose to show the sketch or show the music, or such a thing, not with the purpose to enjoy only the ego. If you do such expression in a much deeper, a kind of giving yourself to get a connection with life, at that moment, that is good. It's a gratitude action, without reward. That it should be done in such a way, whatever a person is, if it is a religious [or spiritual] person, well he can do that in this point of view.

We are in front of the inexplicable; we are in front of the infinite in each moment of life. We are infinite, we are thinking, we are finite because we die, we probably die, that is our idea.

3. Causes of Infinite Rebirths.

We are born and die it's true, but we are still a wave, we don't start [at] any point and don't finish as a point, we continue all the time. Whatever you believe, in reincarnation. Anyway, I will say that whatever reincarnation you believe the reincarnation [be it] religious reincarnation, Christian reincarnation or Muslim reincarnation or a Buddhist reincarnation or a yoga reincarnation [or] believe on the personality can be reincarnate, believe on the body can be reincarnate or believe not on that belie[f], only on the [idea of] free to reincarnate. No matter if it is on the most material thing whether it is reincarnation because you become powder and the powder becomes earth and you continue, as a chemical underground is reincarnation, too. Anyway no matter what you are thinking is not important. In Zen we don't thinking much on such speculation - what we'll be or what we'll not be because we don't know, in fact, exactly, point by point. But one thing is certain is continuation in own way or another and probably in all the way I've said. It's a continuation of even the materialist way to the pure extreme religious way is a continuation, so we are part of the infinite way, so we are always present, in confrontation of the infinite. And we cannot understand that because our mind is not good, our computer is not good at all to understand the infinite. We understand the finite with reason, we cannot understand the infinite. It's not our game. We can accept the infinite, that example it is the point of the people, point of view, with discipline we can see all the Buddhists they accept infinite, but they don't define infinite, they don't try to explain infinite.

There is a point of many religion[s] you accept. Acceptation, do[es no]t mean to be in extreme, no it is to accept to be wise, we have that. So infinite is a part of our life, it is a thing we cannot understand totally, we are part of the machine, just like [you] can see a bolt, [but] don't understand the system, how [the] engine function[s], it's part of the engine but without the bolt, the engine cannot function. But without the engine the bolt cannot exist. So just [as] when you

paint, it is that attitude; it offers a concern with this infinite. You are part. How do we say, it give[s] more reward than a hobby. You become frustrated after a time, the enjoyment disappear[s]; you have to get out of the hobby. You become tired, you become frustrated, nothing to do, bored. But if you have a line you form on to Japanese or Chinese or so that to call [it] the Way. The Way, it means just to walk on that road, to the infinite. I don't much speak about God or nothing, just going to the Way of Life, understand little, little. And the sketch, the sketch is a very good aspect because it's a direct expression and we don't put an ego.

With the ego, when we try to paint better and better, thinking, adjust or so, you come, too much idea, too much wish, too much desire to success, to make something. And sometimes we lose track completely. Is no spontaneity. We do sketch. Is good enough.

It's so typical that we see the big sketch like the sketch of De Gaulle, of Reuben's, of any, Picasso, they are very expensive now. He didn't consider that sketch may be, because he was training in such a way. Also people at the time when they w[ere] living, they didn't care much, but no, they are not expensive because it's an investment. But they understand, they have such life in some sketch[es], extraordinary, sometimes more than in the painting themselves.

4. The Need to stop Discursive Thoughts.

Paint like a child. A child has no, too much ego, more they are small. A child as a three year old, four year old, they do as little. He has very big characteristic, he has ice-cream, they want and they can try ice-cream they want... but is limited in few little things. And we grow after, that is a problem. But when they [grow as a child], the rest of their way of life is very direct spontaneously. They love, they touch, they are not afraid to touch, they are not afraid to touch any subject. They don't like, they don't care really if they shock. They say clearly what they are and spontaneously. When they paint, they paint spontaneously. They want to make a circle, they don't think "Oh, a circle is difficult, what to do with a circle, I [have] never known a circle." They don't think to make, to calculate, a formula to make a circle, they don't think "How will the teacher?" No, they tak[e] short [way], make a circle and it is a circle. And like Jean Cocteau said "Paradox, it's absolutely extra-ordinary that guy or girl without knowledge makes a circle, pure circle and the adult cannot make a circle".

So it's something, [it] is a good intuition, the direct expression, the confidence, and that moment that they come to the ultimate one, one, the really important point of Zen and Sumi-e and Ch'an - confidence.

You believe, believe, [but] maybe not really work[ing] with you[r] confidence.

Believe[ing] sometimes is associated to believe[ing] blind. Some people believe anything, [they] won't believe the priest because he says, [or] I don't believe the politic leader or because he say[’s] that, [or] that you know [to] believe sometimes is associated with like [for example] the word of God, [but] he has been deformed in our time so we don't know really. Believe, believe, believe blind on anything. But confidence maybe is better because we don't use touch. And apart from psychiatrists and some teacher[s], spiritual teacher[s], they always try to teach confidence, ah but confidence enough... Even if you have done bad, you have not to enjoy that... when God say that is good for you.

5. The Need for Correct Confidence in Ch'an (Zen).

No, you, [have] confidence in the sense it has been done, in the sense it has been done as it should be done. So, anyway, be confident in what happens in life. So be confident in your hand. Be confident in your brush. Just as a child, a child is confident. He takes a brush, even [when] the brush is look like a broom, he take[s] a chalk even it is a piece of chalk like so, he take[s] a pencil even it is not very nicely pointed, he [does not] mind. He go in, he express. [When] we are doing we say "Ah my brush is terrible. I cannot [do] painting [if] brush [is] like so". Many times I say "Why, show me your brush, it's better than my brush". Or a little chalk, too short, I cannot do, why that is... who put[s the] excuse, extraordinary thing. Well if you can't move the chalk you can't make a circle with a piece of chalk, [but] the child will do that. That is, the confidence in what you are doing is really a basic thing in Zen. All it is in Zen, Buddhist, teaching of confidence. You believe what you are doing. If you are not confident, you don't do it. It's simple, but most of you want to do it, and same time not do it. So it be not done. It be[comes] half... frustration.

6. Coming to Terms with the Complaining Minds.

When you[’ve] got frustration, well it's not very far from anything, irritation, aggressivity, etc. So come back to the painting, it is the same thing. Get confidence in your hand, don't complain about 'cannot make', don't be worried because you can never make example, or, it will take long time, nothing. You will do it. If you go to Japan the Sensei, the Master, whatever is the Teacher of Meditation or Teacher of Painting, or Teacher of whatever, martial arts, he will say do it. Many people have been there for three and half years and many people [like] myself have done [so], [they] ask why? They don't ban totally because "why" is important to certain things. But too many Westerners ask "why?" And you know it don't, if I gave you, if you have got [an] instant to [sit] with the brush, if you have got "why" and "because" how to paint, you think you won't paint for that. No, of course. You have to take the brush, and the "why" and "because" me in the brush. So many [times], if you make ten strokes, that is the "why" and the result is the "because". And if it's not a good answer, well you have to make ten strokes, one hundred strokes, one thousand strokes. That is the question "because". It is the Practice. And that, I believe in that. I didn't believe before.

7. The Need for Cultivating Patience.

In Australia, I didn't believe. You know you want [to] make quick. You want to [do with] such quick[ness], but Japanese [experience] put me very much on the spot. For example when you do karate in the West, it was a little bit like so but not too much. You[re] sitting in the dojo and you learn the karate, and the very people in the group they say "Why I shall [do] such movement or such movement or [why] the Teacher give[s] certain things [instructions]". Quiet or so and come back again on another. "Why I shall do that movement" "Why I cannot do" or so. So [you] lose valuable time and don't get anything of that.

What I was in Japan, when it was some question... some time unsuitable, he called me "baka". "Make it." "Baka" means "idiot". Make it.

They are very tough like so, but tough doesn't mean they are angry or aggressive. It puts you on your shoes [toes]. You [will] be shocked. "Oh I,.. I." But you make and you make it [with] more hours. Instead [of] mak[ing] ten kata you'll make maybe twenty kata, fifty kata, [and] he will say "sweat", he will say near vomiting, he will push you to the extreme and kick you. You think it is tough.

8. The Kindness of the Teacher.

No, it's good. He is really like a good Father. He is a good Father, I mean gentle man. He won't do bad. He won't do... question, [for example] pin you on the floor. He [want's] you [to] forget such [an] idea, to say always explanation and why... and excuse. He say's [directly] you do it. You do it well. You concentrate on the point, and that is it. Whatever it is, Sumi-e, Meditation, you concentrate on the extreme one, extreme point. You cannot be determinant. You cannot be so, thinking so, you know, mentally, adjust mentally. You liv[e in] the... touch. You make a stroke, you make a stroke. [It] is nothing more. You make a stroke. You [sit] in Meditation, you[re] sitting in Meditation. You don't want sitting in Meditation at this very moment, you don't want sitting in Meditation. You stand up, you move from Meditation. [It] is better than sitting in Meditation and thinking "I don't want sitting in Meditation". You just make the moment. You are really with your decision. Your decision is confidence.

9. Determination of Right Action and Right Effort.

You are confident, you do it. Confidence don't depend from the ego, don't relate on the ego who say 'maybe'. "Oh, you are not so good, stop it". That is not, it is confidence, but it is not true belief. That is always confidence, you know, is always confidence. Whatever you do. If it is a bad stroke, well is a bad stroke. Continue. If it is a bad music, is a bad music. Well alright, continue. It will be

less... less bad stroke. So in this thing you can decide, "I like it" or "I don't like it". But you feel, not from the ego, not because the ego says "I cannot, I am not too good. What say my neighbour when they see my painting?" etc. No. No really you don't, it's something that cannot be explained. You don't feel it, you don't like it. It's not your own, you don't feel "in". Well, you stop it. But you have to be careful when you stop it, to don't stop and come back and stop and come back. You stop it. You stop it. It's the same. So when you decide depending, to start, if you start something you have to really be "in" - confident, concentrate, in the moment, to feel the most of what you are doing. If you do as a hobby, of course you can never know really if you like or not. Because it's too shallow, that, the surface. So it became sometime a frustration at once. You say, "I can never do that, I can never do that". Of course, I have some student who was take the brush, [and] after two minutes of the brush "I can never do that". Of course, on the one stop, but of course you can't... is automatic. No, anything you start you cannot do it, of course, unless you are a genius. Is not many genius. But a genius cannot do some things either. So we are all the same.

Never, is not a genius who make everything. Even this, [e]specially, particularly this thing. You make completely, you try to feel it for a certain time, for a certain time, not one time. You freely, you don't appeal, the appeal for you, even if you make good stroke, even if you make good stroke, even if you make good music at that moment, you stop it. But generally, not. If you, you will see, it is something you come new and is that expression raw.

10. Distinctions between Ch'an and Ego Expression as Art.

So that form of painting is not like painting, academic painting like oil painting you do in Art School which teaches you decoration, or most of time expression of the ego to express something, to express yourself, or to express, I mean yourself, the ego, to express your character or to express something to be proud in front of people or to get acceptance situations, social situation, status. That is not the same, because in the School of Art, generally what happens, they teach you that. They don't teach you such feeling; they don't care about that, so that form of painting is a really spiritual discipline. And, you have not to become too much ritual. Don't care too much, just a certain rule of cleanness, organisation, good behaviour with material, but don't be over, don't necessary to make particular thing. You just paint. You take your brush, you paint, and you express. And you know well, when it is not right. But when it's not right, you just make again. Until you come to the right way. What is right or what's not right. Is not to be conforming to what the teacher say. Or the stroke of ancient Teacher, exactly. It is to create an emotion. And that, the Teacher knows and you know same.

11. CHI and LI appearing as emotional power.

It's what the Chinese call to have the CHI, or the KI in Japanese, or have the life.

A Chinese painter could come and say, "that painting has ink, it has not the Chi". What it means? It means he has the technique of the ink but he has not life. He has not picked the key. Or maybe we say that painting has the stroke but has not the ink. But he has the life. He has the way to make the stroke, technically, beautiful stroke, but the ink has no feeling. But he has behind he feels the power, the emotional power of the Li. The Li is, or, it'll be on the Ki. The life is the infinitive. Potential life. So it is a rope for the student to continue in the technique of the ink because he has the technique of the stroke, which is very important, and he has the emotional power, the emotional sense to the infinitive. Something, intuition, something we don't understand. He has that. He has the life. When a Master say, "That painting has the Ki and the Li", that means he has everything, he has Ki, he has the spirit of the pen related the spirit of life. So that you have to consider it. Any painting, oil painting, watercolour, sketch, anything, sculpture, music, you have to get the Ki and the Li, you have to get the spirit. The emotional, you feel. When you go to exhibition you see a painting, you see something. Gee, that thing. It's not because it's a blue colour or because it's signed Mr. R or Mr. P. It's just because, it's something you say you don't understand. Could be very different, different people. That too, because the way to discover spiritually different. We say Nolan, well we are not emulator of Nolan, but is no matter. He has maybe, his way for another person.

12. Sincerity is a needed commitment.

It depend how much he was sincere that is not my concern. I mean is not, I don't comment on that. But if the man has sincerity when he works, if he has the Ki and the Li, it will show this sincerity, this confidence, in this painting. So we will bring to other people. Well, certain painting has not that. Is only make by the critic or by money. But that is another feature. So some people admire a certain painting but [it is] because they are very nice drawing, delicate, and is lot of work, ah yes but is no emotion. What is a work, is not, important. Is not important, that important is emotion, we have another painting is one few true stroke over, I don't want [to] say Chinese, Western example of painter, that is burning... you say "Oh", you feel you can, you feel it, you can. At that moment, that is important. Is that the..... point of, in the Sumi-e, to create the Ki and the Li, to create the spirituality, to create the life.

13. Moving away from the Clinging of the Burning House of Impermanence.

You recreate the life like say the Okusa the woodcut, you know Okusa is The Wave, the Japanese man who did [a] lot of woodprint. That man was living as a Zen Master, by himself. He don't... go to the temple. He was completely detached from life. Well he lose, he change ninety-seven time [his] house, he lose all his painting when he was nearly sixty and they burning. He looks at the house burning with all his paintings. He say "Oh well when I born I wasn't come with knowledge", and he go. So he was a man like so, who was only, don't, just was

living with completely no attach (sic), painting, painting. People was against him. No people recognise him apart [from] the people from the street, the population. But the people from upper class never recognise him, because he was not painting the exact thing they attempt by the rule of the ego. You know your painting a lotus, you painting a rock hill, you painting certain things considerate really not other. So... he painting Samurai in the twilight, he painting a camel, he painting a bird, he painting a butterfly, he painting what he should, he contact. That man he has he said "You don't", well I lose the way of the explanation, what he said, come back again.

14. Enduring confidence is Superior to Sentimental Love.

Anyway, it was, what I will put again that to finish, that is to confidence. Confidence, expression of Ki, expression, ah yes, he said "you have to paint all your life if you want to be a painter. You don't need to be intention to paint. You paint. You paint gently. You paint all the time. You make a little sketch, you take two, all the painting you make three days. So you paint, so you draw. You have the life." And he said when he was very old it was he say "Let me live twenty year more so I can, to paint". You know in a sense, you never finish; you have to work always more. You living twenty year old you come to one hundred, well you have to live a little bit more too to continue, to continue, to continue. You learn all the time you come, you come. You become exultation but for that you love and because we speak much about love in West. We speak too much about love. If you go to Japan they don't speak about love. Chinese don't speak very much about love. But they love. Love means a sense, not such a sentimental approach you know, "I love you" or such a thing, "I love the marriage", or so become very sentimental. Sentimental approach is again the kind of hobby. Is a limited, but is another, you have to be one with what, such is a love. Confidence bring you to be one with the subject. So of course you love the stroke the same way that you love a people, that you love your child, you what, you love the... Is a different, it look absurd but is true. If we go such way is a different approach than sentimental approach. It has nothing to do with sentimental approach to love. A child that you love, you accept you are one with it. You know.

15 A mind with Loving Kindness is superior to protecting your hate for other sentient beings.

Contact is a point of [the] Buddhist, the great love, the love without end. At [which] you feel completely contact and is infinity, like in Buddhism, Zen, Taoism. You can love your enemy. Love means for that sentimentality you will be very weak and accept to make... for that. You have to neutralising. But you have in you[r] mind you cannot have a mind to killing, "I must killing", because he do that to my family, "I must destroy him", or "I must avenge, avenge, make vengeance". That is the wrong attitude. You can feel pity for him. You can, must try to neutralise him to the point, it is... if he need to be in the jail because his

absolute like a tiger and, well, he has to be in the jail. But you must not enjoy a victim say "He must be in the jail, I must put him in the jail". [For] Most of [the] people it's so, thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking "Must be punished, he must be punished, he must be punished". What, the punishment is not the punishment, what you can do with punishment. You can only, you can only neutralise the negative effect, and negative effect is around you of course. If a man come with[at] you, with a broken bottle and put in your face, well you be stupid to say "Oh I love you", bang, and there's a bottle in your face. That is not very good. You have to do something. If is a point you have to kill him, well you have to kill him. But two is a big difference to say such a people, for example, such act of a man going with a bottle in... to say "he should be killed, he should be end that little war", you know that really isn't to will to get the same way people who on the war". "Ah, he's a German, they have to be killed". Or, "The Jew, they have to be killed", or the Russian, they have to [be] destroy[ed], such attitude is a stupid attitude. We cannot do that. We can do stupid thing. We do not even have pity, for so long they have not done nothing bad. Is a good Russian. Is a good German, is a French whatever, I don't mind if he is, they go bad, well you have to have pity because they out of the track, they suffering self. You have to neutralise after, so that is a love. So, a love with concern by the war, a fluidity.

16. The fluidity of Generosity is superior to the rigid desire of something for yourself.

I want something; I must bring you for a little bit. I didn't give you my book of spirituality? No, a little booklet. I did it for yoga education centre, sometime. A little booklet, on spirituality, Zen and marriage. (Student: "you've given us a small booklet"). Ah yes... Ah, that is it. So spirituality I consider, spirituality and love go together, is something, is a fluidity. You have to go home with the life, fluidity, like Tai Chi, like Tao, like Zen. Fluidity like water, we go home of course, if you hurt it, well you have to accept your dose. So that love should be in the painting too. Such fluidity. Fluidity of the brush, fluidity of the ink, fluidity of emotion. That is a propose.

17. Persistent Ch'an Practice is superior to wasting your lifetime.

So is a long way, your life, because you know you cannot do that, achieve that in a course of adult education with a week, and you cannot do that in Ch'an Academy in three weeks... You can... you go the Ch'an Academy, you go to my place, you go to adult education, or you do by yourself. No matter, that is the training. That is your life, you know, what you do. If you stop there in Ch'an Academy and go practising in your life at home, it's good. Just the way. If you are working very very hard in the Ch'an Academy and stop it after, waste time; because will disappear, you know, everything disappear, nothing stay, that is in Buddhist too. Nothing stay. You learn to do something very deep in your life. And

we say "I know it" and I will do another thing and when you come back few year later, ah, you forget all what you have learned one time. Well, how many people learn to dance, how many learn to gymnastic and they come "Oh when I was young I was a good gymnast too I will show you". Being, boom you crack the back, because you finish the gymnast, is no more... it has gone.

18. Knowing what you are doing is superior to remaining in ritual activity.

Training is all the time we are born like so life is like so. Only all things change. We don't do it, it change. A stone is warm in my pocket, is still warm long time. I put there in cold. Change. To be warm it has to be in my pocket, or in the fire. So all the time you practise.

So when you practise something, you have to know what you are doing. Certain thing you can practise, which is basic is a Meditation. Meditation, not only sitting. Walking Meditation, eating Meditation, living Meditation. You can [experience] is a training. You can practise things besides the sitting Meditation. But everything you will do after in your life, like Japanese said, the Zen men, is exactly the same thing. If you put the spirit of Zen on the way of eating, it will be way of Eating. Is not much done, I never see a dojo of eating in Japan, but it is what's called Zen food, Zen ryori (food). You, the people, make the food in the Way of Zen. So it's certain vegetarian food, in certain way, a certain thing is a kind of ritual in the Way. Is not very developed, it exists all the same but because we are... too much to the stomach, the palate you know. But it could be done so that is why is a minor way of learning, to the general way. So you have that generally in the Temple. A Master while eating Zen ryori (food), eating Zen way, drinking Zen way, is sleeping Zen way. Well they do all Zen way. But that is a minor like of everyday life, plus the sitting Meditation with the mind.

19. Do not make the fears of historical peasants your reason for violence.

So you have the way of practising Martial Art, well... because Martial Art was a necessity. It was done generally [as way of] their life. No people was sure when... they have to get the way of the sword. They have to get the way of protect themself from the sword with empty hand, because the peasant has no permit to carry weapon. So they make empty hand. It become Karate. Karate means empty hand. Aikido, the way of... But the other has the sword. So some has the good spirit with the sword as explained. The Samurai is the... Some has not good spirit. Some was... with the sword. So all the time was a very dangerous time. So that they have a way. But when you see people not practising Martial Art, in such extent, so many do so much, I think, well really true it is lot of violence in the street, have never, I cannot say so many violence as necessary to be a super karate... to destroy everything. Is not a necessity really. But he has the advantage, maybe to relax the indirectly he relax the aggressivity in the man or woman. They will then put down this power to attack. Is a possibility. But that

is, they say it is a meaning.

20. The Wise cultivate gentle Art.

But you have art with gentle art, like painting, like tea ceremony, all such art are everyday life. They've always been and will be always. You have always tea, you have always painting, you have always doing gentle things so you can apply. Confidence in every action you are doing. And [in] that moment you will take away lot of problem in your life. In [wrong] confidence create frustration, frustration create aggressivity (sic), irritation, aggressivity against others, against yourself. Could be against yourself. Depend on how your mind is built. Masochist will destroy himself, he don't want destroy another.

21. The wise cultivate recollections on death and dying.

And when I was in the Temple, the Master, sometimes I say my problem, he laugh to me, he say, "Don't worry, you have not much to live". So while you know, when you hear that few times, I say it's true. What is the business to be worry about? If you have much money, or not much money or a car red or a car not red. Well you will die. It may be true. Who knows when we die? Maybe when you go out from this Temple today you trip and you fall on the stone and you get a very silly death, you know, on the stone, finish. No Sumi-e, nothing. That is no problem.

So that is I think many times, that when I'm getting problem and well after... so it is a book, a magazine, I don't know if you get in Ch'an Academy. It's French from Sydney; it's called "No Importance", the book from the Zen Centre. I give the address to June one time. They have magazine produced by Zen Centre in Sydney and conducted by Roshi Eikan, American from Hawaii, and it's very good. They give lot of explanation of Sutras, and way of life and such a thing. I must give address. You can get, it don't cost very much I think, cost \$10 a year or something.

22. The Wise stop playing with paradox.

Yes, is no importance. Nothing has importance. I finish that by paradox in Zen. Everything is very important but nothing has importance. Is very important what you doing now at the [present] moment, but the result is not important. That I cannot explain, you understand what I mean? Well you know, don't put too much emphasis O.K., what you make it is important. You have to be really on it. But the result, you don't be proud or unhappy, well is a result, is an indication what is your state of mind. And it look cool, but it give you much more than you thinking. You say "Oh yes", you feel where you are or what people are doing most of time in life. Is looking what they, what they are is a problem in life. Confucius said no, Lao-Tse no Confucius said, "What is a problem of life?". Problem of happiness, problem of life.

23. Only ignorant people cultivate causes for their unhappiness.

No people don't want [to] be happy. Must be sick people, like that it is. But maybe he's happy to be sick, to be unhappy. Masochist is happy to be unhappy you know. But generally anything want be happy, in their own way. I don't mean the stones thinking. I'm not silly like that. But I mean the stone living as a stone don't want change, it's the most simple way or living. But it is at home they are living. A leaf is healthy leaf, a healthy tree is a healthy tree. Is living well. If you become, he get parasite he die. Well, the animal he will look after, I mean the tree will look after source of good nutrition, and if he get it, he will live. So he look after happiness, in one way, in very simple primary way. But an animal do the same. He look a cat, he want go to the warm he don't want go to the cold, he do everything, which is directed to happiness, spiritual balance. You have to [be] happy physically and I don't believe people who reject the physical, you know. If they abuse... it want fanaticism. People say "no matter, it's only the mind". No, why you can get, why you can get a vase without flower, well maybe but is not very much reason to have a vase without flower. And you want get flower without vase, where you put the flower? You have the vase and the flower, that is a good idea. And you change the flower; you change the water to get the flower living most long time possible. That is our life. The water, well is a spirit, is a training, is whatever you want. And the healthy food, everything, you try to keep the mind alert a long time. But we die anyway. The vase will break one day eventually, and the flower will die. No matter. But you try to keep the best way it is. You don't want the flower [to] decays the same day you get it. It's not funny, or rotten or so. So that is to keep together the... like in yoga, like in Zen, like anything. So the painting is a training. We say in the modern world, Japanese didn't say that but what I wrote was agreed, is a... visual therapy. Is a therapy to guide the mind and the body to the right way. Just as yoga have many, many, some religion too try. Some religion try bad way, but they try, but they can't.

24. The Middle Way.

If he appear at the Buddhist, the Zen, the Ch'an, is the same, the yoga get the really way. The more wise way, without fanaticism. Religion can go on fanaticism and say "Well, that is, if is not, I kill you". While you have the Muslim. Another say "That is, or you go to the hell". No, is not such a thing. Is not blackmail in life. Blackmail don't exist. Blackmail is a creation of the ego to get something. Love don't exist either. Is a creation from the ego, from the people. To get a, our money in life, but a volcano has no love, a planet has no love. Is love, oh we come back to the same way than Zen, part of that is love or is no love. Is a unity of acceptation (sic) and fluidity we live together. That human being creates separation, discrimination, is stupid human being. A volcano is bad. We fight the sea, we tame the nature, but it's not normal you know Mountain move. Mountain move? The nature, we cannot tame the nature, we cannot fight the sea, we cannot stop volcano. Such a thing don't exist. They all move together, they are

not bad. Is action and the interaction. At we make certain rule and certain attitude in our life, a human life, to create harmony. Is just because we are, maybe,... to be no harmonic by our ego. So we fight our ego.

25 Choosing to create balance (harmony) and avoiding disharmony.

So we have to create, we have to create love, we have to create acceptance. We create such a thing to balance, because we have the free choice as Lama Yeshe said. Animal has no free choice, stone has no free choice. Is at home. A stone is living. Is at home, but not is absolutely ruled by mathematic. No problem. No choice. Animal has no choice. A little bit, he has a sense of love, depends the graduation of this complex mechanism. He is complete in certain system in advance what to do. Human being know nothing. They born empty, weak and they have the free choice. That is a problem of life too. The free choice. But you have the choice to bring your mind. Is because, they create Zen, it's a choice. Animal don't create Zen, they don't create anything. So we create Zen to compensate what is unbalanced in our body. We have to create our own harmony because we are not. If you look people, in general human being, well you know, look the newspaper you will see how harmonic they are. Look the story how harmonic they are. Even the primitive one, even well I say aboriginals, we consider wise. Well, some is wise, but not all is wise. So human beings in general has the free choice. He can do what he want. He can improve; he can go further, further, further to the knowledge of infinite. And because that he create such discipline.

Some create better discipline than another, that is a question of luck, intellect, that is appeal? But it will change, some country is wise one certain period, another is not. Anyway we have the free choice and we should choose to finish that, we should choose the discipline which is suitable for [our] own pattern, character, because each of us has a different pattern. Maybe you are like a Mercedes, you are a tractor, you are a V.W. you are a locomotive etc., so we can't expect of each one to do the same thing, you know. One go fast, you cannot make a Mercedes working in the field, you cannot make a tractor going on speed. Each one has a quality particular for each one. But from that, so we have to choose a discipline. So we choose, you chose the painting, because your mind, we are on the same way, altogether in such room. We have chose the way of Painting and Meditation, but maybe another one chose the one of Martial Art. No difference, because that in Japan they said "Don't touch many things, try to make many things". Some people want make karate... I make karate, I make that, I make that, I make that. They all, you know, like a superman. What it is like eating fruit with sugar and sugar with fruit, you know. Is the same. All is the same spirit. Vase, as my teacher of Ikebana said, is the same source, expressed in different direction to suit your personality... and from that you continue. You can make only one discipline. Is enough. A Zen Master he don't, he will make, he make Calligraphy. Sometimes he don't do at all. He just sitting in Meditation, is...

26. Putting down the mist to find Clear Mind.

So one-way, do well, the moment, develop confidence to put away the ego because the ego is a source of [non]confidence (sic). It create doubt, not the good doubt. It create the doubt, question and to catch better - have not enough money, have not enough talent.

"I'll get more, I must catch more, catch more". So confidence take away simple intuitive confidence, catch away the ego beside and you will be free from frustrations, less free, I'm not free. Practice still, free from frustrations, free from aggressivity (sic) and you feel appear at the same. That is about all that. So now we painting after so much blah blah. Anyway it is a painting good in the progress... Beside colourful in life too, don't be too much caught by ritual too. I say that because I will just explain that mist sometime, many time yes, in Japan in China is considered as a symbol of life so you, the life is like a bridge in the mist or such a thing. Well is nice to [have a] sentimental picture, but don't be believe it too much. It's just a guide you know, a[n] image. So the ritual are good as a guide. Many thing can be use[d] as a guide. As Lama Yeshe said too, you have to always say all the time, as in Zen, the mind clear like a surgeon. You cannot operate the people, you cannot yourself with a dizzy mind thinking everything. You have to be clear, cool clear and you have always in life when you follow the Way of Zen, you have always on the operation table, operating yourself. Now.....

27. Now to Practice the Path.

... so I will give you first a technique, wet brush on dry paper.

This transcription of a Chan Academy Workshop lecture by visiting Sumi-e Master Andre Sollier, was held at the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd., on 5 July 1987.